



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

**[FWS-HQ-MB-2023-N041; FF09M21200-234-FXMB1231099BPP0; OMB**

**Control Number 1018-New]**

### **Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget; Northeast Region Hunter Participation Surveys**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are proposing a new information collection not in use without Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of publication of this notice at <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under Review - Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function. Please provide a copy of your comments to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803 (mail); or by email to [Info\\_Coll@fws.gov](mailto:Info_Coll@fws.gov). Please reference "1018-New NE Hunt Surveys" in the subject line of your comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Madonna L. Baucum, Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, by email at [Info\\_Coll@fws.gov](mailto:Info_Coll@fws.gov), or by

telephone at (703) 358-2503. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA; 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 5 CFR 1320, all information collections require approval under the PRA. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

On February 9, 2023, we published in the *Federal Register* (88 FR 8448) a notice of our intent to request that OMB approve this information collection. In that notice, we solicited comments for 60 days, ending on April 10, 2023. In an effort to increase public awareness of, and participation in, our public commenting processes associated with information collection requests, the Service also published the *Federal Register* notice on *Regulations.gov* (Docket No. FWS-R5-NWRS-2022-0152) to provide the public with an additional method to submit comments (in addition to the typical *Info\_Coll@fws.gov* email and U.S. mail submission methods). We received one anonymous comment in response to that notice which did not address the information collection requirements. Therefore, no response is required to that comment.

As part of our continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burdens, we are again inviting the public and other Federal agencies to comment on new, proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps

us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following:

(1) Whether or not the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;

(2) The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) How might the agency minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of response.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

*Abstract:* The Service has overall Federal responsibility for managing the Nation's fish and wildlife resources. Part of the Service's mission is to provide the public with wildlife-based outdoor recreation opportunities on National Wildlife

Refuges, National Fish Hatcheries, and other Service lands (collectively, refuges). These outdoor recreation opportunities include hunting, which is an important opportunity for people to connect with nature, harvest food, and assist the Service in managing wildlife populations.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (the Act; 16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*) stipulates that refuges undergo a comprehensive conservation planning process that, among other things, must look at the compatibility of wildlife-dependent recreation (including hunting) on refuges. We will use the information from the proposed survey effort to inform planning on refuges as mandated by the Act.

Hunting on refuges is regulated by both State and Federal laws, as well as through refuge-specific regulations. These refuge-specific regulations are made in accordance with hunt plans required to be developed for each refuge. These hunt plans outline refuge-specific bag limits, season dates, areas open and closed to hunting, allowed hunting time, and other requirements. The hunt plans are an important tool that refuges use to manage harvest, safety, and visitor experience.

Creating hunt plans relies on sound biological and social data. Understanding hunter experience, preference, and harvest helps refuge managers and planners tailor hunt plans to suit biological and visitor objectives and maintain a safe environment for hunters and non-hunting visitors.

To ensure the surveys were comprehensive, the Service convened an interdisciplinary team made up of biologists, managers, visitor services specialists, social scientists, and law enforcement officers. The team identified data gaps needed to inform future hunt plan development, identified safety

concerns, and considered methods to better understand hunter preference in order to improve visitor experience.

The public may request copies of any form or document contained in this information collection by sending a request to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer in **ADDRESSES**, above.

*Title of Collection:* Northeast Region Hunter Participation Surveys.

*OMB Control Number:* 1018-New.

*Form Numbers:* Forms 3-2557 and 3-2558.

*Type of Review:* Request for new OMB control number.

*Respondents/Affected Public:* Individuals.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Frequency of Collection:* On occasion.

*Total Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost:* None.

Requirement	Average Number of Annual Respondents	Average Number of Responses Each	Average Number of Annual Responses	Average Completion Time per Response	Estimated Annual Burden Hours*
Form 3-2557, "Hunter Participation Survey"					
Individuals	50	1	50	20 mins	17
Form 3-2558, "Spring Turkey Hunter Participation Survey"					
Individuals	50	1	50	10 mins	8
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>		<b>25</b>

\*Rounded.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The authority for this action is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

**Madonna Baucum,**

*Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 2023-11747 Filed: 6/1/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/2/2023]